

## Representations of Socialist Yugoslavism in Belgrade's Public Space 1944-1961

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### *Summary*

This article investigates Yugoslavism in the first two decades of socialist Yugoslavia by focusing on a specific case study: the capital city of the federal State. The research takes into consideration a period of greater centralization of the Federation during which new important representative functions were envisaged for Belgrade; at the same time, this was a phase of a more intensive promotion of “socialist Yugoslavism”. Based on both archival material and published sources, it focuses on the identity politics implemented to transform Belgrade's image, paying particular attention to identity vectors such as monuments, street and place names, museum exhibitions, public celebrations, and their role in the urban public space. The main goal is the analysis of some aspects of the Yugoslav identity discourse emerging in this particular context, trying to recognize the forms of representation of Socialist Yugoslavism promoted in the political practice and to contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between Yugoslavism and socialism.

*Keywords:* Belgrade, Yugoslavism, Socialism, Public Space, Identity Politics

### Introduction

In a letter sent to the delegates gathered for the city's Party Congress of the capital of Yugoslavia in September 1964, Tito openly stated: “Belgrade has become a synonym of Yugoslavism”.<sup>1</sup> The ideological values implied in his statement were already partially declining in the Yugoslavia of the sixties and Tito's words were probably part of what has been called his last “campaign in defence of Yugoslavism” (Marković, 2000: 243-245). Nevertheless, those words witness the role of the

<sup>1</sup> Tito's letter, *IX Gradska partijska konferencija*, 10-11 September 1964, p. 2/2, Historical Archives of Belgrade (IAB), *Fond Gradski Komitet – Savez Komunista Srbije – Beograd*, box 181.

capital city as understood and planned by the head of state in the previous two decades. The aim of this article is to investigate socialist Yugoslavism through the particular case study of Belgrade and its public space until the beginning of the sixties, as a period of greater centralization of the federal state (Jović, 2008). Consequently, the political role of the capital city was consolidating, while identity politics promoted an image of Belgrade coherent with the role of “capital city of all the peoples of Yugoslavia”.<sup>2</sup> The research follows recent trends that started to consider the urban centers of South-East Europe as unique subjects of study, important in better understanding wider political and cultural dynamics (Dogo, Pitassio, 2008; Roth, Brunnbauer, 2008; Damjanović-Conley, 2013; Radović, 2013).

The period under review represents a phase of particular interest with respect to the dynamics of identity in post-war Yugoslavia, as characterized by a more intensive promotion of “socialist Yugoslavism”. Although Yugoslavism has been the subject of greater academic interest in the last decade, the literature regarding the socialist version of this idea is still limited (recently Haug, 2012). Indeed, only in recent years the importance of the national discourse for the legitimacy of the communist parties and the promotion of “socialist patriotism” in the twentieth century have been the object of deeper academic scrutiny. The relation between socialism and nationalism has long been underestimated, despite the fact that two of the most influential scholars in the field of nationalism, Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm, made important references to this very question, stressing the significance of national feelings in Marxist movements and the tendency of successful revolutions to define themselves in national terms (Anderson, 1983: 12-13; Hobsbawm, 1990: 146-148). The need to retrieve and expand these considerations inspired one of the most significant initiatives in this direction in recent times: a special issue of *Nationalities Papers* edited by Martin Mevius was devoted to “the communist quest for national legitimacy”, and encompassed a wide range of European cases (see Mevius, 2009). Historians are therefore reconsidering the role of national discourses in the identity politics of communist states, particularly trying not to look at these two ideologies in terms of total mutual exclusion, but instead investigating their peculiar dynamics of interaction in political practice. If, until recently, the main focus had been the Russification of Soviet patriotism (see, for example, Brandenberger, 2002), more attention is paid today to the specific cases of the different People’s Republics of Eastern Europe (Bottoni, 2007; Palmowski, 2009; Sygkelos, 2011).

Socialist Yugoslavia, unlike the monarchical Yugoslavia that preceded it, constitutionally adopted the character of a multinational state – inhabited by Serbs,

<sup>2</sup> The definition is taken from *II Mesna posleratna partijska konferencija KPS Beograda 26-VI-1947*, IAB, Fond Gradski Komitet – Savez Komunističke Srbije – Beograd, k. 141, p. 13.

Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and others – and any sense of common identity had then to be considered in supranational terms. Actually, in everyday political practice, the ideological foundations could be adapted to the prevailing situation, and the Yugoslav experience remains particularly complex because of the relationships between socialism, Yugoslavism, and the different national identities, exemplified by the oxymoronic meanings of the slogan “brotherhood and unity” (Wachtel, 1998: 132). Approaching the issue of the definition of a new Yugoslav identity after the Second World War, some scholars have recorded exclusively a policy of repression of the different nationalisms within the SFRJ, aimed to ensure the supranational community. According to them, Tito and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (League of Communists of Yugoslavia after 1952) – in complete discontinuity with the integrative model that characterized the monarchical Yugoslavia, aimed at merging South Slavic peoples in a Yugoslav nation – supported just a “minimal” supranational version of Yugoslavism that guaranteed full recognition to the different Yugoslav nations (e.g. Milosavljević, 2003; Bakić, 2011). Nevertheless, other scholars have talked of a promotion of a sense of Yugoslav belonging *de facto* in national terms, enforced by integrating politics in a cultural and linguistic sense and implemented by the Party until the beginning of the sixties (e.g. Pavković, 1999; Marković, 2000; Gabrić, 2004). In 1961, as witnessed by the Čosić-Pirjevec polemic (Budding, 1997), the debate on the national question in Yugoslavia was reopened and the following years led to the definitive abandonment of every sort of “integrative” Yugoslav vision.

In fact, an accurate study of the actual form and contents of this debated Yugoslavism has been only partially elaborated. It seemed therefore necessary to further research the topic, studying the most practical “transmission belt” of such an ambiguous ideological approach and trying to reconstruct the cultural framework of the Yugoslavism promoted by the Party at that time. This article investigates the mentioned dynamics in the specific context of Belgrade, considering modern capital cities as territorial areas that epitomize to the maximum degree the concentration of symbolic elements of political collective representation (Daum, 2005; Therborn, 2002, 2006). Similar works focused on capital cities’ public spaces have helped to better understand the complex dynamics of identity that characterised communist countries (Azaryahu, 1986; Light, Nicolae, Suditu, 2002). The first section of the article is an overview of the efforts made in order to reinforce the Yugoslav image of Belgrade. This is done by taking into account the public space’s identity vectors that embody the representative functions of the capital city. The following section analyses the particular forms of the Yugoslav identity discourse emerging in the urban context of Belgrade, aiming to describe the relationships with preceding Yugoslav history, Yugoslav space, the cultural background of Yugoslav peoples and their specific identities.

## Building the Capital City of the Socialist Homeland

An accurate analysis of identity politics implemented in Belgrade's public space during the period 1944-1961 reveals a significant influence of Yugoslavism. In order to preserve the role of Belgrade as the capital city of the state of the South Slavs after the Second World War, a transformation simply inspired by the urban model of socialist ideology would not have been sufficient. A coherent redefinition of its Yugoslav representative meanings was also necessary. As emphasized by Tito after the city's liberation on 20 October 1944, the event assumed a new founding role which was expected to impact the collective symbolic meanings that the capital was to take up in the new state:

Belgrade, our capital city of Yugoslavia, only today really becomes the capital city of all South Slavs, a city that will be loved by all the peoples of Yugoslavia, a city for which all sons of Yugoslavia have shed their blood. It is from here, from Belgrade, that the guiding principles, which have carried us through these difficult days, should shine – the idea of brotherhood and unity and the idea of a bigger and happier Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup>

In the course of the two previous decades, for the communists Belgrade had epitomized a monarchic, bourgeois and reactionary regime: the city had become the symbolic center of the "Great-Serbianism" promoted by the Karađorđević dynasty. In the wake of a revolutionary discourse striving to mark discontinuity with this depiction, a radical change in the cityscape seemed essential, along with a pronounced redefinition of the representative ties between the city and the citizens of the entire Federation. In the following years Belgrade was meant to assume a new representative role encompassing the main *cultural functions* performed by the state capital city in modern times: representative and symbolic functions (buildings, monuments, avenues), preservative functions (museums, archives, cultural institutions), and performative functions (parades, celebrations, commemorations) (Daum, 2005: 15-18).

The first step to tackle the problem of Belgrade's pre-war image was the planning of a completely new center for the capital city, on the plain just on the other side of the Sava River. *Novi Beograd* (New Belgrade), besides realizing the ideal model of the socialist city, would also represent, according to the Party's leadership, "the first unified center for all our peoples, an ideological, cultural and administrative center, a center of brotherhood and unity".<sup>4</sup> The new center was supposed to host most of the federal institutions, both those of political-representative mean-

<sup>3</sup> "Prvi govor Maršala Tita u slobodnom Beogradu", *Politika*, 28 October 1944, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> See Ljubo Ilić, "Uz izgradnju Novog Beograda", *Arhitektura*, no. 8-10, 1948, p. 9.

ings – such as the palace of the Presidency, the buildings of the Central Committee and the Federal Ministries – and the ones with a cultural function such as federal museums and the Yugoslav Opera (see Blagojević, 2007; Kulić, 2013). In addition, during the first four years of construction, from 1947 until 1950, more than 140,000 young Yugoslavs, coming from all over the country and organized in the so-called youth work brigades, were involved in the construction of *Novi Beograd*.<sup>5</sup> Besides favoring mutual knowledge and ties between young volunteers coming from different Yugoslav regions, the operation aimed to strengthen the new representative bond between the capital city and its new generation of citizens.<sup>6</sup>

The split between Tito and Stalin and the consequent economic problems faced by Yugoslavia almost suspended the construction of *Novi Beograd*. However, not only did the urban reshaping imply the construction of a new part of the city: it also gradually involved the old Belgrade in this redefinition processes. On 20 April 1946 the local government adopted the first impacting measures, ordering the renaming of dozens of streets and squares all over the city.<sup>7</sup> This adjustment of toponyms was seen as a necessary measure because, as the local newspaper *Dvadeseti Oktobar* explained, “during the occupation, some names were changed, and the new names were equally foreign to the idea of brotherhood and unity of our peoples, in contrast with the feeling of love that Belgraders and all our peoples used to feel and feel towards our capital”.<sup>8</sup> Even if in the early post-war years the public space of the city was inevitably under the pressure of a strong Sovietization imposed by the close alliance with Moscow (Manojlović-Pintar, 2005: 142-143; Miloradović, 2012), after the 1948 split, the public discourse on the “proud capital city of the socialist homeland” as the center of a strongly unified country was reinforced.<sup>9</sup> In the following years new spaces and buildings were planned and realized, toponyms were changed and commemorative plaques unveiled. The city’s public space saw the erection of new commemorative busts and monuments. As in the whole country, the new topography of memory was largely aimed to celebrate heroes and events from the People’s Liberation Struggle, as the Second World War was referred to in socialist Yugoslavia. Despite the fact that the Partisan resistance had its most epic moments far away from Belgrade, it was important to define and promote a central place in the public memory of war for the capital city. The political need to remedy the relative margin-

<sup>5</sup> Ljubica Radojković, “Omladinske radne brigade na izgradnji Beograda 1947-1950 godine”, *Godišnjak Grada Beograda*, no. 5, 1958, p. 411.

<sup>6</sup> “Došli su sa raznih strana”, *Dvadeseti Oktobar*, no. 247, 12 August 1949, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> “Odluke o promeni naziva ulica”, p. 1, IAB, fondo *Izvršni Odbor Narodnog Odbora Grada Beograda – Povereništva za kulturu i umetnost*, br. 4, f. 1d.

<sup>8</sup> “Promene naziva beogradskih ulica”, *Dvadeseti oktobar*, n. 72, 19 April 1946, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, “Raste i cveta Titov Beograd”, *Borba*, 20 October 1949, p. 3.

ality of Belgrade was realized by insisting on the fact that, according to the official narrative, the decision to start the uprising was taken in the city by the leaders of the Communist Party coming from the different regions of Yugoslavia in July 1941. The regime thus created a memorial museum in the villa where this “historical decision” was taken in order to reinforce this version of collective remembrance.<sup>10</sup> This narrative was completed with the emphasis on the “Yugoslav significance” of the liberation of the capital city in 1944. Partisans from all over the country – “sons of the whole of Yugoslavia” – sacrificed themselves in this decisive battle, as witnessed by the Memorial Cemetery of the Liberators of Belgrade, the biggest and most important monument built in the fifties in the capital city (Abram, 2012: 181-182).

Although the discontinuity imposed by the revolution implied the rejection of the centralist-integralist model promoted in the inter-war years by King Aleksandar Karađorđević, clear signals of the tendency to reinforce the cultural and symbolic functions of Belgrade as the center of the Yugoslav state appeared since the liberation. Already in July 1946, on the occasion of the first major plenary meeting of the Federal Committee for Culture and Art, it was decided that Belgrade should periodically host federal art exhibitions, cultural festivals (featuring folk groups from all over the country) and theater contests with groups of all the republics.<sup>11</sup> The capital city was then also chosen to host the rare Federal (Yugoslav) cultural institutions active in the public space. The most important were the Military Museum of the Yugoslav People’s Army and the Yugoslav Drama Theater, both situated along the city’s backbone that ran from Kalemegdan fortress, along Marshal Tito street to Dimitrije Tucović Square (today Slavija). The Yugoslav Drama Theatre was founded in 1948 and gathered all the best artists from all over the country to constitute the “first Yugoslav theater in the history of the Yugoslav peoples”<sup>12</sup> in order to create a synthesis between the different Yugoslav theater traditions. In contrast, the Military Museum was one of the oldest cultural institutions in Belgrade, founded in 1878 on the Kalemegdan fortress to celebrate the Serbian military tradition, but “in the socialist fatherland it experienced a full regeneration”.<sup>13</sup> Until then “not a single moment of war history of Croatia, Bosnia, Slovenia or Macedonia was represented”,<sup>14</sup> while

<sup>10</sup> “Muzej istoriske odluke”, *Pobjeda*, 4 July 1959; “Muzej 5 jula 1941 godine”, *Godišnjak Muzeja grada Beograda*, no. 1, 1954, pp. 342-345.

<sup>11</sup> “Konferencija plenuma Komiteta za kulturu i umetnost pri vladi FNRJ”, 3-4 July 1946, Archives of Yugoslavia (AJ), Fond *Savet za nauku i kulturu vlade FNRJ*, folder no. 81, act 114.

<sup>12</sup> Milan Bogdanović, “Jugoslovensko dramsko pozorište”, *Politika*, 8 April 1948, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> “Oružje iz zbirke Sindelića i Resavca u Vojnom Muzeju”, *Crvena Zvezda*, 2 November 1954, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> “Vojni muzej Jugoslovenske narodne armije”, *Godišnjak muzeja grada Beograda*, no. 1, 1954, pp. 324-325.

after the liberation the Museum became a “school” meant to teach to all Yugoslav citizens the “love for the fatherland and patriotism”.<sup>15</sup> It was intended to be an all-encompassing exhibition of Yugoslav military history – starting from the arrival of Slavic tribes in the Balkans and culminating with the People’s Liberation Struggle – hosted in the place that, more than any other, represented the city and its history.

For some years, the idea that Belgrade could actually be the most appropriate place where to express a Yugoslav synthesis survived and continued to influence the semantics of its public space. In the mid-fifties, the ideological commissions of the Party realized that the Museums of Revolution established in the Republics were spreading “the idea that the revolution was not united, but that it was a matter of the different regions”, nurturing a fragmented image of the past.<sup>16</sup> As a reaction to these divisive narratives, in 1959 the Central Committee founded a new federal institution in the capital city to remedy this serious problem.<sup>17</sup> The Museum of the Revolution of the peoples of Yugoslavia started to work in the following years, while a new huge and representative building for the same institution was projected in *Novi Beograd*.

In the fifties, Belgrade was also presented as the center of the Yugoslav artistic space (Denegri, 1993: 10-11). Artists and groups from all over the country were hosted in the city regularly, as witnessed by the activity of the two major artistic halls managed by the Association of Fine Artists of Serbia (ULUS – *Udruženje likovnih umetnika Srbije*) – the exhibition Pavilion at Kalemegdan and the art gallery at Terazije.<sup>18</sup> The arrival point of this trend was represented by the creation of the *Moderna Galerija* in 1957 (that would become the Museum of [Yugoslav] Contemporary Art<sup>19</sup>) and by the organization of the first *Jugoslovensko trijenale* in Belgrade in 1961. Political bodies that monitored the ideological-educational aspects of public life expected from such central institutions a significant contribution to the solution of the problems of integration of the cultural and artistic life of the country.<sup>20</sup> In this way the capital city was to become the place where Yugoslav art

<sup>15</sup> Dobrivoje Popović, “Gde je prošlost večito živa”, *Crvena Zvezda*, 1 May 1956, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> “Sastanak Sekretarijata Ideološke komisije CK SKJ”, 6 June 1957, pp. 5-6, AJ, Fond *Centralni Komitet Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije – Ideološka komisija*, b. 20, VIII, II/3-35.

<sup>17</sup> “Odluka o osnivanju Muzeja revolucije naroda Jugoslavije”, AJ, Fond *Centralni Komitet Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije – Izvršni Komitet*, CK SKJ III/83.

<sup>18</sup> See for example, “Pregled izložbi priređenih u Galeriji – Ulus -Terazije 2 u vremenu od I-I-1959 do 31 maja 1960”, “Pregled izložbi priređenih u umetničkom paviljonu na Malom Kalemegdanu u vremenu od I-I-1959 do 31 V 1960”, IAB, Fond *Skupština Grada Beograda – Gradski sekretarijat za obrazovanje i kulturu*, no. 6, f. 3b1.

<sup>19</sup> *Muzej savremene umetnosti*, Belgrade, Muzej savremene umetnosti, 1965.

<sup>20</sup> “Problemi likovne umetnosti”, 1959, pp. 1-2, AJ, fondo *Socijalistički savez radnog naroda Jugoslavije – Komisija za idejno-vaspitni rad*, folder no. 47.

production could be exhibited in its entirety. The effort was reinforced by referring to the city's past history as the cultural center of South Slavs, even prior to the foundation of the common state (see Stojanović 2008; Vučetić, 2009). Consistent with this interpretation, Rodoljub Čolaković's inaugural speech at the *Jugoslovensko trijenale* emphasized how Belgrade was resuming its historical central role because "since the beginning of the century, even in those hard times when we were divided by several state borders, [it] has offered hospitality to our peoples' artists and supported their common exhibitions".<sup>21</sup>

In fact, the legacy of the city's past centralistic role was not completely erased, and in that period it was sometimes allowed to re-emerge. Belgrade was at the same time the center of the Federation and the capital city of the People's Republic of Serbia. While formally there was a clear division between federal cultural institutions (carrying a Yugoslav connotation) and Republican cultural institutions (that should have had Serbian meanings), it is interesting to note that in those years also non-federal institutions frequently worked as proper promoters of a wider Yugoslav culture. This was made possible in consideration of the heritage collected in previous decades, when their institutional role was not limited to the territory of Serbia.<sup>22</sup> The most important example in this sense is probably the National Museum located in Republic Square, the city's main square. Despite being one of the most important cultural institution under the administration of the Republic of Serbia, until the beginning of the sixties it was increasingly urged to interpret a Yugoslav role, as explained by its director Veljko Petrović: "Belgrade is a Yugoslav center, therefore the National Museum must maintain a Yugoslav character".<sup>23</sup>

Besides monuments or cultural institutions, federal mass celebrations held in Belgrade also contributed widely in presenting the city as the center of the country. On those occasions, the capital city fulfilled its performative functions, hosting massive events designed to "put on display" the ideology of the state (see Petrone, 2000). During those events several interventions on the cityscape of Belgrade used to reinforce the ideological meanings of the city's public space: the boulevards, the main streets and buildings were extensively decorated with Yugoslav and communist flags, with slogans and portraits of the Party's leaders.<sup>24</sup> The socialist calendar

<sup>21</sup> "Stvaranje u atmosferi slobodnog umetničkog izražavanja", *Politika*, 25 May 1961, p. 12.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Đorđe Mano-Zisi, "Nešto o problematici muzeja u Beogradu", *Muzeji*, no. 7, 1952, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> "Narodni Muzej raspolaže delima velike vrednosti", *Politika*, 12 January 1959.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example "Parole i slike na zgradama u Beogradu za 1 maj 1949 godine", 15 April 1949, pp. 1-7, AJ, Fond *Centralni Komitet Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije – Ideološka komisija*, k. 2, VIII, II/1-b-58; "Plan Dekoracije i dekorativnog osvetljavanja za proslavu 20. oktobra 1959 g.", pp. 1-5; IAB, Fond *Gradski komitet – Savez Komunista Srbije – Beograd*, b. 551.



foresaw numerous events of this kind – including celebrations such as Victory Day and Republic Day. The most impacting among these were the federal parade for the international workers' day and Tito's birthday on 25 May, that in those years was emerging as one of the most "Yugoslav" events. Especially until the beginning of the sixties, Belgrade functioned as a central "stage" to represent new socialist Yugoslavia both within and outside the country, to the extent that in that period even the city's liberation day, a local celebration held on 20 October, was widely honored and presented by the Party "as a symbol of the liberation of the whole country" and the "celebration of the liberation of all our peoples" (see Abram, 2012).<sup>25</sup>

Of course, the coherence of the process of building the capital city of socialist Yugoslavia was affected by the different actors involved: the Party, the government and the mass organizations from the local level, through the republican one, up to the federal level. There were both financial problems and political controversies – due in particular to the problematic balance of power within the Federation and to the demands of preserving also the Serbian image of the city – that prevented some projects from being realized: some of the most important monuments were never built, some street names never changed, while at the same time the federal cultural institutions such as the Yugoslav Dramatic Theatre or the Museum of the Revolution faced several difficulties and the original concept of *Novi Beograd* was gradually abandoned. As can be seen, in the period considered in this analysis, the city of Belgrade certainly underwent a reinforcement of the cultural functions proper of a capital city. But the process of Yugoslavization that began after the liberation of the city in 1944 had an irregular development and eventually remained incomplete. Following the decentralization process during the sixties, the city began to be considered by the Party leadership less and less as the "capital city of all the peoples of Yugoslavia", while its role of capital city of the socialist Republic of Serbia gradually prevailed. Nevertheless, despite the contradictions and the weaknesses of the identity politics, it is important to underline that Yugoslavism played a specific role in the definition of the new "socialist Yugoslav image" of Belgrade, during the first two decades of the post-war Federation.<sup>26</sup> In that period, the public space of the city became one of the principal settings for the negotiation, production and transmission of the new Yugoslav identity discourse.

<sup>25</sup> Moša Pijade, "Godišnjica oslobođenja Beograda", *Borba*, 20 October 1945, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> See Tito's words in "Beograd je za nas bio i za vreme čitave Narodnooslobodilačke borbe ostao centar iz koga je zračio nov duh, nova ideja pokreta", *Politika*, 20 October 1954, pp. 1-2.

## Representing Socialist Yugoslavism at the Center of the State: Between Multiculturalism and Integrative Tendencies

Between 1944 and 1961, Belgrade condensed some of the transformative processes going on in the rest of the country, and it therefore provides a unique opportunity to more extensively analyze the form and content of socialist Yugoslavism. From an ideological point of view, the Party never distanced its official position from a supranational definition of Yugoslavism: there was certainly no trace of a coherent policy that had as its goal the creation of a Yugoslav nation, and this multicultural paradigm was widely visible in the capital city. The representation of the Yugoslav community was often an expression of different Yugoslav national cultures, narrated through the peculiarities of their histories – contributing to a depiction of Yugoslavism as a mosaic, and as unity in diversity. Some of the most important expressions of the cultural life of the capital city testified this trend, as for example the frequent exchanges between the various artistic associations from the different republics, which while promoting a mutual knowledge simultaneously legitimized their different national affiliations, sometimes even emphasizing them. When the first Belgrade exhibition hosting artwork from Croatia was inaugurated, the “Croatian art” was presented as specific for its Croatanness beyond belonging to different stylistic schools.<sup>27</sup> In the same way the official presentation of an exhibition of Slovenian artists, held in the capital city in 1958, asserted that “the piece of land where our artists were born and where they were raised has left its mark on them, no matter which art tendency and school they later belonged to”.<sup>28</sup> When this approach was applied to the pan-Yugoslav representative exhibitions that were periodically held in Belgrade – as on the occasion of one of the major cultural events in those years, the exhibition “Half a century of Yugoslav painting (1904-1954)” that presented the artists by nationality<sup>29</sup> – it was not always easy to reach an agreement concerning the proportions to be maintained among artists representing the different republics, and it was often necessary to deal with the partisanship of several members of the committees.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, the multicultural approach had always been widely and significantly respected in the capital city, where the different cul-

<sup>27</sup> “Izložba Uluh-a u Beogradu”, *Politika*, 9 December 1956, p. 10.

<sup>28</sup> Zoran Kržišnik, *Savremeni slovenački likovni umetnici*, Ljubljana, Udruženje slovenačkih likovnih umetnika, 1958.

<sup>29</sup> *Pola veka jugoslovenskog slikarstva: 1900-1950. Novembar 1953 – januar 1954*, Belgrade, Narodni muzej, 1953, pp. 3-14.

<sup>30</sup> See “Sastanak Umetničkog saveta Saveza likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije”, 15 March 1960, p. 6, AJ, fond *Savez udruženja likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije*, k. 9; “Stenografske beleške sa savetovanja aktiva propagandista”, 21 June 1961, p. 1/3, Archives of Serbia (AS), *Centralni Komitet Saveza Komunističke Srbije – Ideološka komisija*, no. 5.

tures of the Yugoslav peoples – including the Serbian one – could meet and engage in dialogue, having the preservation of their own specificities guaranteed, with each nation entitled to the right to “its own development” within socialist Yugoslavia. This principle found definitive consolidation in the most representative buildings of the country, such as the headquarters of the Federal Executive Council, inaugurated in 1961 in *Novi Beograd* and designed to host the federal government. Inside there were six salons, each dedicated to one of the federal units (the “Croatian Salon”, the “Serbian Salon”, the “Slovenian Salon”, etc.) and consistently furnished in order to be a “micro museum” representing the traditional and cultural specificities, the folklore, the history and the art of a Yugoslav people (see Mišić, 2011: 114-127).

Beyond these significant examples regarding the widespread implementation of the multicultural version of Yugoslavism promoted by the Party, the study of the daily political practice of the time in Belgrade reveals also a certain ambivalence regarding the interpretation of what was to be socialist Yugoslavism, pan-Yugoslav culture, or Yugoslav socialist patriotism. It is therefore possible to identify several interpretations of a Yugoslav identity discourse that was actually much more intense and eventually integrative. They never became explicit or hegemonic, but exemplified how in different situations the orthodoxy of the supranational/multicultural approach could be negotiated. The starting point was a Yugoslav historical narrative that in many cases overwhelmed the different histories of Yugoslav peoples and was primarily based on the People’s Liberation Struggle, the backbone of public memory. In this sense, the Yugoslav dimension of the war was openly and intentionally emphasized, as a way to counterbalance the fact that at the time the liberation struggle was often remembered more as the summation of different local experiences. Belgrade was one of the places where the attempt to promote a common patriotism was stronger, through the celebration of common heroes, battles and sacrifices and a glorification of the blood of the Yugoslav peoples shed for the freedom of the homeland. The ethnic connotation of the fighters and the specificity of the experiences of different Yugoslav peoples were in many cases pushed into the background, if not completely forgotten. One of the most significant examples of these tendencies are the two commemorative plaques dedicated in Belgrade to the twenty-six “writers of Yugoslavia who fell in the struggle for liberation 1941-1945”: the names were listed in the Cyrillic alphabet on the first plaque and in the Latin alphabet on the second one, avoiding ethnic associations, to the point that the name of the Slovenian writer Tone Čufar appeared in Cyrillic, while the name of Kole Nedelkovski, a Macedonian, was inscribed in Latin script.<sup>31</sup> The memory of the People’s Liberation Struggle in socialist Yugoslavia therefore assumed a pro-

<sup>31</sup> “Književnici Jugoslavije odali poštu svojim drugovima koji su pali kao borci i kao žrtve u borbi protiv fašizma”, *Književne Novine*, no. 12, 4 May 1948, p. 1.

nounced political function (see for example, Höpken, 1998). Nevertheless, what is even more interesting is the persistence of a longer common historical narration, showing the Yugoslavs as protagonists of a centuries-long struggle for freedom and independence that culminated in the People's Liberation Struggle. On several occasions it was reinforced through commemorations, but also visualized in museums and public exhibitions. Some preliminary indications were, for example, detectable in the street names of socialist Belgrade, where various personalities to whom the streets were dedicated during the thirties continued to be celebrated. The names of historical figures that played a relevant role in the process of political and cultural unification of Yugoslav peoples were removed by the Serbian collaborationist regime during the occupation, but were soon reintroduced by the local administration between 1946 and 1949. From an ideological point of view their roles were reinterpreted according to the Marxist vision of history, but the fact that representatives of the bourgeois political parties such as Frano Supilo, or Catholic priests as Franjo Rački and the Slovenian Illyrian Davorin Trstenjak immediately regained a place in the new topography of the capital city of socialist Yugoslavia reveals that the heritage of the past was not easily dismissed.<sup>32</sup>

As far as the visual dimension is concerned, continuity with previous Yugoslavism was also sanctioned through the revitalization of one of the most important monuments erected in Belgrade during the monarchist period. The Monument to the Unknown Soldier, located on the top of the Avala Mountain, was conceived in times of "integralist" Yugoslavism "to represent the core of Yugoslav national imagery" (Ignjatović, 2010: 649). Benedict Anderson considered these monuments among the most significant symbols of the modern culture of nationalism, stressing that, although "void as these tombs are of identifiable mortal remains or immortal souls, they are nonetheless saturated with ghostly national imagining" (1983: 17). The socialist rehabilitation of the monument – after the removal of the King's commemorative plaque – was explained by the journal of SUBNOR, the veteran association, with the following words: "the Unknown Soldier is today the symbol not only of those who died in previous wars for freedom but also of the thousands and thousands of unknown heroes who fell in the 1941-1945 War of Liberation".<sup>33</sup> In the attempt to avoid problematic contradictions, it was not made explicit who exactly were the fallen Yugoslavs that deserved to be represented by that monument. An interpretative scheme is detectable in an article published on the front page of the newspaper *Borba* to celebrate 4 July 1957, Fighter's Day and the anniversary of the start of the uprising in 1941. The author referred to the historical Yugoslav heroes with the following formulation:

<sup>32</sup> "Spisak izmene naziva ulica u Beogradu", *Politika*, 14 April 1946, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> "Kako je postao Spomenik neznanog junaka", *Crvena Zvezda*, no. 130, 19 October 1954, p. 2.

In our national Pantheon [*nacionalni Panteon*] we can find not only the mythical Miloš, the rebel Gubec, the colorless Gavrilko, Đuro Đaković, Šoša and dozens of others, but various anonymous enthusiastic rebels, ranging from *hajduks* and *zelenokaderaši*, to soldiers, military leaders, communists and partisans.<sup>34</sup>

What was explicitly defined as “our national Pantheon” enlisted historical figures belonging to very different eras: from Miloš Obilić, the hero of the Serbian medieval epic who killed Sultan Murad I at the Battle of Kosovo Field (1389), to Matija Gubec, the leader of the Croatian-Slovenian peasant revolt of the sixteenth century. The assassin of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, Gavrilko Princip, and the leaders of the Communist Party Đuro Đaković and Josip Mažar Šoša were also included. Equally significant is the mentioning of the *hajduks*, well-known figures from Balkan folklore who are considered both outlaws and anti-Ottoman guerrillas, and the Green Cadres (*zelenokaderaši*), South Slavic deserters of the Habsburg army in the Great War. Alongside these historical characters are soldiers from more recent times, and especially the Partisans who fought in the liberation struggle. The final impression is a blending of historical periods, aiming to present the past as a secular common struggle of all the Yugoslavs. An attempt to provide a coherent and integrated narrative of experiences and personalities of the past was implemented in another symbolic memory site, the fortress of Kalemegdan, where the visitors of the Military Museum could see with their own eyes the evidence of the common Yugoslav past. The complexity of a millennium was reduced to a centuries-long struggle for independence that culminated in the liberation war of 1941-1945. This tradition was presented as a fundamental substrate of Yugoslav identity, evoking experiences and feelings common to generations of South Slavs, in a narration that made of the *hajduk* the forerunner of the Partisan, fighting against the ever-present enemies of the freedom of the peoples of Yugoslavia: from the Turks to the Austrians, from the Nazis to the Soviets.<sup>35</sup> In this way, the most important and most visited museum in the capital city of post-war Yugoslavia did not devote its exhibition space to the history of the labor movement or international socialism but to what was called, as Tito said at the inauguration of the new permanent exhibition in 1961, the “historical struggle of a people”.<sup>36</sup>

Another process implemented at the same time was the reinforcement of the historical relationship between the Yugoslav community and the entire territory of the socialist homeland. First, carrying on a process started before the war, more

<sup>34</sup> Živko Milić, “Iskre i plamenovi”, *Borba*, 4 July 1957, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> See *Vodič – Vojni muzej JNA*, Belgrade, Vojni muzej JNA, 1953.

<sup>36</sup> “Predsednik Tito otvorio stalnu muzejsku izložbu ratne istorije naroda Jugoslavije”, *Borba*, 21 October 1961, p. 1.

streets of the capital city were named after rivers, mountains, lakes and cities of the country as part of a common Yugoslav geographical imaginary.<sup>37</sup> The process incorporated significant new names from the experience of the Liberation War, such as Igman and Zelengora Mountains or the island of Vis. In other cases there was an attempt to exploit deeper historical ties. The proposal to name a street after the Macedonian center of Prilep, for example, was justified by the fact that it was a town “for the first time mentioned in 1014, under the Byzantines, and has played a great role in the history of our peoples”. Similarly, the street dedicated to Carinthia was motivated by the need to celebrate the “Slovenian Carinthia, where our population is presently fighting to join the Yugoslav motherland against the Austrian fascists”.<sup>38</sup> The politics of representation of the Yugoslav geography was maintained *de facto* in continuity with the monarchical period, integrating the experience of the liberation war and promoting in the streets of the capital city a specific territory, bonded to the South Slav community by a centuries-old relationship. This geo-cultural imaginary was enforced in several public events, as in the well-known celebration for Tito’s birthday on 25 May. Prior to 1957 the celebration culminated in the arrival of six batons (*štafete*) in Belgrade, each after having travelled within the territory of one of the six federal units and strongly characterized as the baton of that particular Republic.<sup>39</sup> Since 1958 the ritual changed: a single Yugoslav relay was introduced – turning what was before a composite ritual into a Yugoslav collective path. The relay then crossed the entire landscape of the homeland, through the countryside, cities, towns, historic places, and ending with a triumphal arrival in the capital city, reminiscent of the rituals designed by nation-states to “discover the homeland”, such as the Tour de France (see Thiesse, 1999: 245-246).

Thus, the capital city was presented as the cultural center of the country, even though an open debate about the practical dimension of cultural relations inside Yugoslavia was largely avoided until the early sixties. In one of the first and rare public reflections on the issue, the Slovenian writer Miško Kranjec, while recognizing the specific characteristics of different Yugoslav peoples, identified in the new political and social context the possibility of an integrative process:

While we choose from our past, critically assessing, and spread all around the country only the works of our greatest authors – because the cultural heritage of all

<sup>37</sup> See “Redovna sednica komisije za spomenike i ulice: poziv sa materijalom i dnevnim redom”, 2 October 1962, IAB, fond *Skupština Grada Beograda – Gradski sekretarijat za obrazovanje i kulturu*, no. 32, f. 15.

<sup>38</sup> See “Obrazloženje uz predlog za promenu naziva ulica u Beogradu”, 1947, IAB, fond *Izvršni Odbor Narodnog Odbora Grada Beograda – Povereništva za kulturu i umetnost*, no. 4, f. 1d.

<sup>39</sup> See *Deset godina Titove štafete*, Belgrade, 1956, AJ, Fond *Savez socijalističke omladine Jugoslavije*, folder no. 62.

our peoples has not been altogether evaluated – nowadays every, even minor, important cultural achievement becomes a common good of all our peoples: a good book will make its way throughout Yugoslavia, a good song will travel around the country, a good theater play will be played on all stages, a good painting or a sculpture will leave an impact outside of its native borders, and a good musical piece will be listened to everywhere.<sup>40</sup>

The article, invoking the “development of a deeper unity of our cultures in a common Yugoslav culture”, was rather explicit in its approach and indirectly testified the fact that such vision could found some support by cultural and political elites. While the statement on the present time pointed out that a common culture would arise along with the new cultural production, also the not-socialist cultural heritage of the Yugoslav peoples was taken into account. This attention was confirmed by some trends observed in Belgrade since the first postwar years. For example, on the occasion of the first great federal cultural event in the capital, the Youth Festival in 1948, the Party’s ideological commission strongly criticized the fact that “it was not possible to see that we have a cultural heritage, it was almost exclusively things that were produced during the war and after the war that were shown”, namely the socialist cultural production.<sup>41</sup>

However, in Belgrade’s public space that common heritage was often promoted through commemorations, celebrations, and cultural and artistic events. In June of 1956, the authorities organized a great celebration dedicated to Stevan Mokranjac, involving choirs coming from various centers of the Federation, to show how “the new socialist generation also considers the value of the cultural heritage that Mokranjac has left”.<sup>42</sup> There were several signs of a tendency to go beyond the mere mutual knowledge between different national cultures, working for the recognition of a pan-Yugoslav culture (*opštejugoslovenska kultura*) belonging to every Yugoslav. From the combination of the toponyms, monuments, and celebrations, a sort of Yugoslav “outdoor anthology” started to be defined, undoubtedly incomplete, but that included writers, poets and composers from other Yugoslav regions as France Prešeren, Petar II Petrović-Njegoš, Ivan Mažuranić, Oton Župančič, Vatroslav Lisinski, etc. In the inaugural speech of the Yugoslav Drama Theatre in 1948, Eli Finci recognized the specificities of the different national traditions, but also clearly

<sup>40</sup> Miško Kranjec, “O kulturnom jedinstvu”, *Književne Novine*, no. 18, 15 June 1948, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> “Zapisnik sa sastanka održanog u Agit-propu”, 30 December 1948, p. 2, AJ, Fond *Centralni Komitet Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije – Ideološka komisija*, b. 4, VIII, II/2-b-13.

<sup>42</sup> Božidar Stančić, “Proslava stogodišnjice rođenja Stevana St. Mokranjca (1956-1914)”, *Godišnjak Muzeja grada Beograda*, no. 3, 1956, p. 589.

spoke of “merging them in a greater and more profound organic unity”.<sup>43</sup> Until the early sixties the *de facto* mission of the theater was considered to be the participation in “the creation of a unified Yugoslav culture”.<sup>44</sup> One interesting example was the celebration of Marin Držić, one of the finest writers of the Republic of Dubrovnik. His comedy *Dundo Maroje* was played hundreds of times at the Yugoslav Drama Theatre in Belgrade, and Držić was elected as one of the fathers of the Yugoslav theatre.<sup>45</sup> The drama represented and ennobled the local theatrical tradition, referring to its Renaissance origins. In this celebratory article published in the Party’s newspaper it was even considered not as the product of an artistic individuality, but rather as a collective work of the Yugoslav artists:

*Dundo Maroje* does not belong only to his creator; it belongs also to Fotez, to Stupica, and to all other artists who worked on it and helped to make this comedy and play become a full traditional and definitive part of the dramatic foundation of the Yugoslav theatre and literature.<sup>46</sup>

The public discourse on the past could even step back to the times when a specific South Slav culture was formed, a tendency that became stronger since the rejection of Stalin’s Pan-Slavism of the forties. In the following decade, the roots of the Yugoslav culture were presented through two large archaeological exhibitions organized by the National Museum and entitled “The ethnogenesis of the South Slavs in the early Middle Ages through material culture” and “Illyrians and Greeks”. The first exhibition opened in 1950 and was organized for the purpose of promoting an interpretation of the early differentiation of South Slavs, shedding light on the fact that “as early as in the ancient times South Slavs gained certain traits different from the other Slavic people due to the specific conditions of their formation”.<sup>47</sup> The exhibition aimed to emphasize how important elements of the native Balkan culture in the early Middle Ages had “gradually become part of Slavic culture and how they have been partially preserved until today”.<sup>48</sup> The importance of the Illyrian heritage

<sup>43</sup> “Svečanom pretstavom Cankareve drame ‘Kralj Betajнове’ sinoć je počelo rad Jugoslovensko dramsko pozorište”, *Borba*, 4 April 1948, p. 2. See also Milan Bogdanović, “Jugoslovensko dramsko pozorište”, *Politika*, 8 April 1948, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup> “Kriza mišljenja o teatru, a ne kriza teatra”, *NIN*, b. 647, 2 June 1963, p. 8.

<sup>45</sup> Eli Finci, “Marin Držić”, *Jugoslavija*, 1949, p. 101; Milan Bogdanović, “Marin Držić: Dundo Maroje”, *Književne Novine*, no. 10, 8 March 1949, p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> Slobodan Selenić, “Tri stotine puta”, *Borba*, 22 September 1957, p. 6.

<sup>47</sup> “Izložba etnogeneze Južnih slovena u ranom srednjem veku prema materijalnoj kulturi”, *Borba*, 8 June 1950, p. 3.

<sup>48</sup> Đorđe Mano-Zisi, Milutin Garašanin, Mirjana Čorović-Ljubinković, *Etnogeneza Južnih Slovena u ranom srednjem veku prema materijalnoj kulturi*, Belgrade, Umetnički muzej u Beogradu, 1950, p. 7.



for Yugoslav society of the fifties was confirmed by the exhibition “Illyrians and Greeks” held in 1959. Although the nineteenth-century Illyrianism was completely rejected from an ideological point of view, it was nevertheless maintained that a relationship existed between the ancient indigenous people and the Yugoslavs of the twentieth century. The collection of artefacts coming from all over the territory of Yugoslavia aimed to emphasize how that experience represented a common heritage for all Yugoslavs, representing, in the words of the curator of the exhibition, “the substrate in the formation of a specific and, at the same time, common culture of our peoples”.<sup>49</sup>

The analysis of Belgrade’s cultural atmosphere and public space shows how the integrative tendencies produced the contradictions that would lead to the reopening of the debate by the Party’s ideological commissions at the beginning of the sixties. The field of visual arts was, for example, one of the realms in which practical choices had a wider public impact, as on the occasion of Yugoslav/federal art exhibitions. At some of these events national sections were eventually abandoned (they used to have a Croatian section, a Serbian section, a Slovenian section, etc.) to present unified Yugoslav art, representative of the whole country. Its selection and definition were increasingly based on quality criteria, collecting the best of the Yugoslav artistic production. Different exhibitions could be, for example, characterized by a clear disproportion of authors coming from a single republic, and the reason was that a particular artistic discipline was much more developed in some particular region.<sup>50</sup> This process led to a delicate reflection on the paradigms that concerned the cultural life of Yugoslavia as a whole. In 1957, the criticism of the “reciprocity” policy – which guaranteed to each republic its own representational space – reached the summit of the Association of Visual Artists of Yugoslavia (SLUJ), where many argued that the events of “Yugoslav character” had to promote the artistic quality of the Yugoslav production, without worrying about “the number of works that represents each republic”.<sup>51</sup> In that period the need to define a “unitary Yugoslav criterion” [*jedinstveni jugoslovenski kriterijum*] was increasingly discussed, concerning visual arts but also the country’s culture in general.<sup>52</sup> The process posed an open and

<sup>49</sup> Đorđe Mano-Zisi, “Ilirci i Grci”, *Borba*, 29 December 1959, p. 7.

<sup>50</sup> See for example, *Izložba jugoslovenske grafike*, Belgrade, Savez likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije, 1954; *Savremena Jugoslovenska keramika*, Belgrade, Muzej primenjene umetnosti Beograd, 1954.

<sup>51</sup> “Zapisnik sa sastanka Izvršnog odbora Saveza likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije”, 17 June 1957, pp. 4-5, AJ, Fond SULUJ – *Savez udruženja likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije*, b. 9.

<sup>52</sup> See “Zapisnik sa sastanka Izvršnog Odbora Saveza likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije”, 30 May 1958; “Zapisnik Plenuma Izvršnog Odbora Saveza likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije”, 9-10 May 1960, Fond *Savez Udruženja likovnih umetnika Jugoslavije*, b. 9.

significant challenge to the multicultural paradigm, demanding the definitive ideological formalization of the integration process of the Yugoslav culture. The same principle was also applied in one of the most important cultural events of those years: the first edition of the *Jugoslovenski trijenale*, organized in the capital city in 1961.<sup>53</sup> However, just a few months later, it was clear that Party leadership increasingly saw the “Yugoslav criterion” as a deviation from the official ideological line.<sup>54</sup> The integrative tendencies became weaker and disappeared in the following years, with the definitive affirmation of what has been called Kardelj’s concept, which emphasized “the socialist character of Yugoslavia and not the ethnic similarity as the main unifying force in the country” (Jović, 2008: 63).

## Conclusion

The examination of the representative functions of Belgrade – besides contributing to an understanding of an understudied period of the city’s history – has shown how Yugoslavism was still quite visible in the first two decades of socialist Yugoslavia. The new sense of community did not find its legitimacy only on the socialist values and on the repression of the various nationalisms. On the contrary, the historical, cultural and ethnic reasons that legitimized the existence of the state of the South Slavs were not censored or marginalized; indeed they were often maintained – although reinterpreted – as part of the identity discourse that was promoted in the public sphere. However, living or visiting the public spaces of the center of the Federation, a multifaceted definition of Yugoslavism could have been noticed; one would have perceived a general ambivalence on the issue and tension between its different representations. Investigating the practical dimension of the identity politics of those years helps grasping the composite character of socialist Yugoslavism and its complex and debated nature. The official multicultural Yugoslavism, promoting a supranational identity that kept together the different Yugoslav peoples, was widespread and influential. But as in other countries of Eastern Europe after the Second World War, socialist patriotism also played an important role in the first two decades of Yugoslavia, favoring integrative tendencies. The stronger interpretations of Yugoslavism were not coherent or systematic, at the same time supported by some Party members and opposed by others, but in different moments they were seen as useful tools to strengthen the unity of the country. In several cases, especially in specific contexts and occasions, these identity narratives were strengthened by using images and rhetoric traditionally associated with the national discourse: Yugoslavs

<sup>53</sup> See *I trijenale likovnih umetnosti: Beogradski sajam, 25. V – 25. VI 1961*, Belgrade, 1961.

<sup>54</sup> “Zapisnik sa sastanka Komisije za ideološki rad CKSKJ sa predsednicima komisija CK republika”, 26 December 1961, p. 6, AJ, fond *Centralni Komitet Saveza Komunista Jugoslavije – Ideološka komisija*, b. 9, VIII, II/2-b-161.

were made conscious of the historical continuity of their shared community as common roots and heritage were stressed with the aim of defining a unified Yugoslav culture. At the same time, the relationship between the people and the territory of the homeland was emphasized, requesting blood and sacrifice for its freedom and independence as in the past. In those years, the political functions of the Yugoslav identity were evident and stronger definitions of socialist Yugoslavism ended up in many cases in direct competition with the “traditional” national identities. On the one hand, the Party always stressed that the sense of Yugoslav belonging meant “not to cancel anything of Serbianess, Croatianess, etc.”<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, it was difficult to balance both dimensions of identity – the Yugoslav and the traditional national. The denouncements of “nationalism” on one side or “unitarism” on the other were aimed to avoid the prevailing of one of the two senses of belonging.<sup>56</sup>

The considerations advanced here are inspired by the research on a specific case study and, besides the fact that the capital city hosted social and cultural phenomena meaningful for the entire country, it would be problematic to carry out an uncritical generalization of the representative dynamics of socialist Yugoslavism analyzed above. Belgrade was probably a unique context in Yugoslavia and it is well known how the definitions of “Yugoslavness” could significantly vary from one geographical-cultural context to another within the Federation. Parallel case studies would be therefore useful to understand how these kinds of identity dynamics replicated themselves in more peripheral areas.

It would however be misleading to conclude that elements of a stronger and integrative policy could be found in Belgrade only because conceived and implemented in a Serbian context, probably the most inclined to Yugoslavism. The Yugoslavism in Belgrade represented in many cases the product of synergy and negotiation that involved the local and the republican levels, but also the top of the Party and the federal institutions, where Party cadres came from all over the country. On the other hand, from the Serbian side there were sometimes negative reactions to a strong Yugoslavization of Belgrade. It was certainly not a problem when “Serbian history” or “Serbian culture” broadened the scope of meanings that gave them a “Yugoslav status”. But in other situations the process of Yugoslavization was contested to protect the Serbian representative character of the city and avoid the possibility that Belgrade ended up really abdicating the role of the capital city of Serbia.

The conclusions drawn from the case study of Belgrade could contribute to the scientific debate on the relationship between socialism and Yugoslavism. Post-war

<sup>55</sup> Milovan Đilas, “Jugoslavija”, *Borba*, 18 October 1953, p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> “O nekim shvatanjima jugoslovenstva”, 9 March 1960, p. 2, *AJ*, Fond *Centralni Komitet Saveza Komunističke Jugoslavije – Ideološka komisija*, VIII, II/2-b-135, b. 8.

Yugoslavism suffered from some of the contradictions that had characterized its entire historical experience (see Đokić, 2003; Wachtel, 1998). Divergent views and uncertain solutions were still present, even in a single-party system the ideological political practice was based on negotiation and compromise. In the socialist era the theoretical principles described national identities as bourgeois products, but they were replaced in several cases by policies that kept feelings of belonging in high regard. When the identity discourses assumed national connotations they tended to become exclusive, questioning the advocated co-existence of different levels of identity. Not surprisingly, in the following period, when the Yugoslav integrative tendencies eventually vanished, the consolidation of a supranational and multicultural Yugoslavism started to be challenged by the reinforcement of other forms of “socialist patriotism” in Yugoslavia (e.g., Serbian, Croatian, or Slovenian).

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